

LIVE STOCK IN QUEENSLAND, 31ST MARCH, 1957.Preliminary Figures.

The table below presents totals of live stock in Queensland at 31st March, 1957, which were compiled from statistical returns furnished by primary producers. Whilst the complete compilation of these returns has not been finalised, the totals so far available make it possible to estimate preliminary totals for the State, together with breakdowns into the three divisions of South, Central, and North of the several categories of live stock.

As in the previous four years, increases were again recorded in the total numbers of cattle and sheep in the State. The number of cattle was the highest ever recorded, whilst the number of sheep has not been exceeded since 31st March, 1944. The decline in the number of pigs in 1956 has been succeeded by an increase to a total which, although not as great as that for 1955, appears to be higher than in any other year since 1950.

Cattle.- Although neither the beef nor the dairy cattle total was individually the highest ever recorded, the combined total of 7,495,000 cattle was an all-time record for the State. Beef herds accounted for 6,113,000 which was some 103,000 fewer than the peak obtained at the end of 1921, but was 167,000, or nearly 3 per cent., greater than in 1956. The largest increase, both absolutely and relatively, took place in the Northern Division where the preliminary figures for beef cattle were 77,000 higher than in 1956. In the Central Division there was a 67,000 increase over the previous year. Both these increases were over 3 per cent. In South Queensland, where dry weather conditions possibly affected both beef and dairy cattle numbers, there were only 23,000 more beef cattle in 1957 than in 1956 - an increase of less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The preliminary total of dairy cattle revealed a slight fall, the number having decreased by about 5,000 in the Southern Division. Some 78.5 per cent. of Queensland's total dairy cattle are located in the south-eastern portion of the State. There was a slight increase in both the Central and Northern Divisions - 1,000 in the former and 2,000 in the latter, thereby reducing the overall deficit compared with 1956 to 2,000.

Sheep.- The preliminary total number of sheep in the State for 1957 was the highest recorded since World War II, but not as high, perhaps, as might have been expected, considering the large volume of wool offered for sale during the 1956-57 season. In addition to larger flocks, this increased offering was caused by the dislocation to normal shearing and selling schedules in the preceding year and to increased weight per fleece. Although the sheep flocks in 1957 were 5 per cent. higher than a year earlier, they were still nearly 10 per cent. below the peak figure recorded in 1943. Increases were general throughout the State, ranging from about 3 per cent. in the Southern Division up to about 9 per cent. in the Northern Division.

Pigs.- Pig numbers increased by 17,000, or nearly 5 per cent., during the year and the total is now greater than the average over the past ten years. Although pigs are heavily concentrated in the main dairying areas there was an increase of 15,000 in the Southern Division despite a decline in the number of dairy cattle in the same area. There was relatively little change in pig numbers in the remaining divisions.

The following table shows the numbers of each class of live stock in the three main divisions of the State.

Live Stock in Queensland at 31st March, 1957 - Preliminary Totals.

(Totals as at 31st March, 1956, shown in brackets.)

Thousands.

Division.	Cattle.			Sheep.	Pigs.
	Dairy.	Beef.	Total.		
South	1,085 (1,090)	1,716 (1,693)	2,801 (2,783)	12,564 (12,227)	322 (307)
Central	216 (215)	2,155 (2,088)	2,371 (2,303)	7,796 (7,253)	49 (49)
North	81 (79)	2,242 (2,165)	2,323 (2,244)	2,880 (2,636)	19 (17)
Total State ..	1,382 (1,384)	6,113 (5,946)	7,495 (7,330)	23,240 (22,116)	390 (373)

A further bulletin, showing details of each class of live stock in each district, will be issued when final figures are available.